

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 SP-02 AID-05 EB-07 NSC-05

CIEP-01 TRSE-00 SS-15 STR-04 OMB-01 CEA-01 L-03 H-02

CIAE-00 COME-00 FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 LAB-04 SIL-01

SAM-01 ERDA-05 DODE-00 FEAE-00 FPC-01 INT-05 PM-04

USIA-06 OES-03 PA-01 PRS-01 AF-06 AGR-05 TAR-01 /123 W

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R 281725Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6023

INFO AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN 0429

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, EEC, EX, TC, GW

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SUBJECT: EURO/ARAB DIALOGUE

REFS: (A) BONN 20083; (B) EC BRUSSELS 426

SUMMARY: MEETING OF THE GENERAL COMMISSION HAS BEEN POSTPONED UNTIL MAY. PREPARATION OF THE AGENDA IS UNDERWAY WITH FOCUS ON LISTS OF SPECIFIC PROJECTS TO BE APPROVED BY THE GENERAL COMMISSION. MEETING OF FOREIGN MINISTERS TO TAKE PLACE APPROXIMATELY ONE YEAR AFTER THE GENERAL COMMISSION MEETING IN THE OPINION OF THE FRG. ZRP
MARY.

1. THE FOREIGN OFFICE (WEISS - EURO/ARAB DIALOGUE OFFICER) GAVE US AN UPDATE ON THE STATUS OF THE EURO/ARAB DIALOGUE. ACCORDING TO WEISS THE EC AND ARAB PRESIDENCIES MET IN MID-DECEMBER. THEY AGREED TO HOLD THE GENERAL COMMISSION MEETING IN LATE MAY IN LUXEMBOURG. IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE FOR THE GENERAL COMMISSION TO MEET IN MARCH BECAUSE THE DATES PROPOSED BY THE EUROPEANS CONFLICTED WITH A SCHEDULED ARAB/AFRICAN CONFERENCE.

2. THE ARABS REJECTED AN EC PROPOSAL THAT THE MEETING OF THE GENERAL COMMISSION BE INTEGRATED WITH ANOTHER MEETING AT THE EXPERT LEVEL. WEISS BELIEVES THAT A COMPROMISE WILL BE REACHED WHICH WILL PROVIDE THAT BOTH THE ARAB AND EUROPEAN CO-PRESIDENTS OF EACH EXPERT GROUP WILL PARTICIPATE IN THE MEETING OF THE GENERAL COMMISSION. WEISS SAID THAT THE EC WILL INSIST THAT THE EUROPEAN PRESIDENTS OF EACH EXPERT GROUP BE PRESENT. HE ASSUMES THU FHB WILL AGREE THAT THE ARAB PRESIDENTS SHOULD ALSO PARTICIPATE.

3. POLITICAL DIMENSION: WEISS SAID THAT THE EUROPEANS ARE HAVING NO DIFFICULTY IN MAINTAINING THE EXCLUSION OF ENERGY QUESTIONS FROM THE DIALOGUE. HOWEVER, THE ARABS ARE STILL INSISTING ON INTERJECTING PROPAGANDA RELATING TO SETTLEMENT OF THE MIDDLE EASTERN CONFLICT. THEY CLAIM IT'S NECESSARY TO STATE THEIR VIEWS ON THIS QUESTION FOR CONSUMPTION IN THEIR CAPITALS. WEISS
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PREDICTS THAT THIS QUESTION WILL BE HANDLED BY ADOPTING FOR THE LUXEMBOURG MEETING THE SAME SCENARIO AS WAS USED AT ABU DAHBI (SEE REFTEL A). IN THIS CONNECTION THE FRENCH ARE PRESSING THE EC FOR A NEW DECLARATION ON THE MIDDLE EAST WHICH IS MORE FAVORABLE TO THE PLO. WEISS SAID THAT DENMARK AND THE NETHERLANDS REMAIN ADAMANTLY OPPOSED TO ANY CHANGE IN THE EC DECLARATION. HE PLACED THE FRG IN MIDDLE ON THIS QUESTION.

4. AGENDA: THE EC IS CURRENTLY PREPARING AN AGENDA WHICH IT WILL PROPOSE IN THE NEXT MEETING BETWEEN THE EC AND ARAB PRESIDENCIES. THE EC VIEWS THE AGENDA AS A LIST OF PROJECTS. ONE CENTRAL QUESTION IS WHETHER THE EC WILL AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE FINANCING OF FEASIBILITY OR PRE-FEASIBILITY STUDIES. THE ARABS ARE INSISTING THAT THE EC FINANCE ONE-THIRD THE COST OF THESE STUDIES IN ORDER TO MAKE PROGRESS TOWARD ACCEPTANCE OF THE PRINCIPLE THAT THE EUROPEANS WILL CONTRIBUTE UP TO 20 OF THE CAPITAL OF THE PROJECTS THEMSELVES. WEISS PREDICTED THAT THE EUROPEANS WILL ACCEDE TO THE ARAB POSITION ON THIS POINT.

5. THE ARABS ARE DRAWING UP THE LIST OF PROJECTS TO BE ENDORSED BY THE COMMISSION. PROJECTS TO BE ENDORSED BY THE GENERAL COMMISSION INCLUDE ONES IN THE FIELD OF OIL (PETRO CHEMICALS AND REFINING), GAS, PHOSPHATES, AND

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POTASSIUM. THE ONE INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT WHICH SHOULD BE APPROVED IS A PORT IN SYRIA ON THE MEDITERRANEAN.

6. AGRICULTURE: FOUR PROJECTS, ONE IRRIGATION AND ONE MEAT PRODUCTION IN EACH SUDAN AND SYRIA, WILL PROBABLY BE ENDORSED BY THE GENERAL COMMISSION.

7. TRADE: THE EXPERT GROUP IS STILL STYMIED ON THE ARAB DESIRE FOR A PREFERENTIAL TRADE AGREEMENT. SINCE THE EC HAS CONCLUDED TRADE AGREEMENTS WITH ALL OF THE ARAB WORLD EXCEPT THE ARABIAN PENINSULA AND IRAQ, THE PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THIS QUESTION ARE NOT GREAT. FURTHERMORE, OVER 95 OF THE EC'S IMPORTS FROM THIS AREA ARE PRESENTLY DUTY FREE. NEVERTHELESS, A QUESTION OF PRINCIPLE IS INVOLVED HERE FOR BOTH THE EC AND THE ARABS AND THERE IS NO COMPROMISE IN SIGHT.

8. WEISS SAID THAT NO DEFINITE PLANS HAVE YET BEEN MADE FOR A MEETING ON THE LEVEL OF FOREIGN MINISTERS, BUT HE ANTICIPATES SUCH A MEETING WILL BE SCHEDULED APPROXIMATELY ONE YEAR AFTER THE GENERAL COMMISSION MEETS.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, POLITICAL SITUATION, INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 28 JAN 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: morefirh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976BONN01509
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760032-0903
From: BONN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760115/aaaaampq.tel
Line Count: 219
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 BONN 20083, 76 EC BRUSSELS 426
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: morefirh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 31 MAR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <31 MAR 2004 by KelleyW0>; APPROVED <17 MAY 2004 by morefirh>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: EURO/ARAB DIALOGUE
TAGS: PFOR, XF, TC, GE, EEC
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006